



FAQs on **FACE COVERINGS**

Under Governor Larry Hogan's direction, state agencies continue to develop comprehensive and coordinated prevention and response plans for coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) will communicate directly with the public, providing updates as this situation develops and accurate information about how to protect yourself and your family. If you have questions about COVID-19 that are not answered here, call your local health department or dial 2-1-1.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF A FACE COVERING?

Face coverings block the spread of larger respiratory droplets, reducing the potential spread of COVID-19. Offer teleworking where appropriate. Give employees flexibility regarding returning to the factory/office.

SHOULD I WEAR A FACE COVERING?

On April 15, Gov. Hogan issued an executive order directing that effective April 18, all Marylanders are required to wear face coverings when inside retail establishments or when riding any form of public transportation in the state. Read the executive order at bit.ly/masks-executive-order. As we begin the process of reopening, Marylanders will need to continue to wear face coverings.

WHAT IS FACE COVERING?

Cloth face coverings can be made from household items and include wearing a scarf or bandanna that covers the nose and mouth. The CDC has detailed guidance and instructions regarding homemade cloth face coverings available at bit.ly/diy-cloth-face-coverings. The cloth face coverings recommended are not surgical masks or N-95 respirators. Those are critical supplies that must continue to be reserved for healthcare workers and other medical first responders, as recommended by current CDC guidance.

WHO MAY HAVE DIFFICULTY WEARING FACIAL COVERINGS?

Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance. Customers with disabilities who are unable to wear a mask shall be provided reasonable accommodations per the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA Title II and III). Customers cannot be asked invasive questions about a disability or requested to provide medical documentation. Employees or staff that cannot wear a face covering due to a disability may request reasonable accommodations in accordance with the employer's disability policies (ADA Title I). An employer's policies may require documentation to grant reasonable accommodations.

WHAT ARE REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS FOR PEOPLE WHO HAVE DIFFICULTY WEARING FACIAL COVERINGS?

Customers with disabilities who are unable to wear a face covering must be provided with an opportunity to receive the same goods and services as customers without disabilities. Businesses should engage the customer in an interactive process to determine possible alternative methods of service that would allow the business to keep its employees and other customers safe, while still providing service/goods to the customer. This could include curbside delivery, personal shopping service in the store to reduce exposure, or phone shopping with delivery. For more guidance on the ADA, contact the Mid-Atlantic ADA Center at www.adainfo.org or 1-800-949-4232. For guidance on COVID19 and employees with disabilities, refer to bit.ly/employee-accomodations.